



Contact: Steve Burger, Chief Building Official
623-932-3004
Sally Ordini, Public Information Officer
623-882-7820

NEWS

City of Goodyear Leads Building Plan Review Development

Faster process impacts home builders and buyers in eight municipalities

(Goodyear, AZ – February 11, 2002) For more than one year, the City of Goodyear has worked with seven other cities to develop a streamlined system for approving residential building plans. The result is the Regional Plan Review (RPR), a voluntary program that eliminates the need for each participating municipality to conduct a complete, separate plan review, thus reducing travel, costs and processing times for the cities, builders and homebuyers. The RPR is effective March 1, 2002.

With the RPR, any non-custom homebuilder may submit standard plans and documents for approval to any one of these municipalities: Goodyear, Avondale, Cave Creek, El Mirage, Gilbert, Litchfield Park, Peoria and Surprise. Once approved, the other participants accept the plans and documents as submitted. Each city will continue to issue its own building permits, to maintain its own schedule of permit fees, and to check for some city-specific items, but the need for each city to conduct a complete plan review is eliminated.

"This is a great step forward," said Goodyear City Manager Stephen S. Cleveland. "With the RPR, builders need only submit one application and one set of plans for review by one entity which will save time and money for everyone involved. Ultimately, homebuyers will benefit from this improved customer-service approach."

Development of the RPR was spearheaded by Goodyear Chief Building Official Steve Burger. "We are extremely proud of the input and strong support received from the construction industry and from our own managers and elected officials," he said. "We are also proud of the way these eight jurisdictions came together to seek uniformity and consistency in plan review and inspections."

The RPR required the cities to seek uniformity and consistency in their plan review and inspection requirements. The cities then had to agree on procedures and adopt the same codes and amendments. They have done so and the changes will become effective March 1.

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The city employees who developed the RPR included: Goodyear's Steve Burger; Ken Sowers, Building Official, Avondale; Bob Lee, Building Official, Cave Creek; Leon Manuel, Building Official, El Mirage; Ray Patten, Building Official, Gilbert; Chuck Ransom, Building Official, Litchfield Park; Neil Burning, Building Official, Peoria; and John Guenther, Building Official, Surprise. They were assisted by plans examiners, permit technicians and building inspectors from each city.

Assisting the city officials were representatives from the construction and homebuilder industries including deputy directors Jerry Leavitt and Rus Brock, Home Builders Association of Central Arizona, and Jim Pate, Regal Homes.

Training on the amended codes, revised applications and new procedures was conducted to ensure that the participating municipal building inspectors and homebuilders understand and follow the new, streamlined approach. Consistency and uniformity in building code enforcement throughout the Valley is the group's ultimate goal.

Packets of information, including the Application Form, Soils Report Review Verification Form, Plan Review Worksheet, Plan Review Checklist Form, and the Plan Submittal Requirements, are available from each city's building department.

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